

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 366

August 4, 1995, 9:09 p.m.
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DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION/Guard & Reserve Procurement

SUBJECT: National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1996 . . . S. 1026. Dole motion to table the Levin amendment No. 2122.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 53-43

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 1026, the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1996, will authorize \$264.7 billion in total budget authority for the Department of Defense, national security programs of the Department of Energy, civil defense, and military construction accounts. This amount is \$7 billion more than requested (\$5.3 billion more for procurement and \$1.7 billion more for research and development), and is \$2.6 billion less than the amount approved in the House-passed bill.

The Levin amendment would add that "The reserve components shall choose the equipment to be procured with the funds authorized herein according to their highest modernization priorities."

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. Following debate, Senator Dole moved to table the Levin amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

Our colleagues have offered this amendment because they do not think enough analysis is put into the current procurement process for reserve forces. We agree. We disagree, though, that the solution is to remove Congress from the process. The needs of the National Guard and reserve forces have historically been a congressional concern. The Department of Defense has avoided making specific budget requests, as has the Administration. Little attention has been paid to making sure that these forces are adequately equipped and trained. This focus needs to change. Our reserve forces are increasingly important in this era of defense downsizing. They have been regularly deployed in recent conflicts, and their abilities are going to become even more crucial as the number of active duty forces are cut further. Accordingly, this report has asked the Defense Department to begin preparing detailed budget requests for the reserve forces and to submit those requests with the budget resolution. This will enable Congress to determine

(See other side)

YEAS (53)			NAYS (43)			NOT VOTING (4)	
Republicans (50 or 96%)	Democrats (3 or 7%)		Republicans (2 or 4%)	Democrats (41 or 93%)		Republicans (2)	Democrats (2)
Abraham	Hutchison	Baucus	Bond	Akaka	Johnston	Gregg ⁻²	Bumpers ⁻²
Ashcroft	Inhofe	Daschle	Kyl	Biden	Kennedy	Stevens ⁻²	Pryor ⁻²
Bennett	Jeffords	Heflin		Bingaman	Kerrey		
Brown	Kassebaum			Boxer	Kerry		
Burns	Kempthorne			Bradley	Kohl		
Campbell	Lott			Breaux	Lautenberg		
Chafee	Lugar			Bryan	Leahy		
Coats	Mack			Byrd	Levin		
Cochran	McCain			Conrad	Lieberman		
Cohen	McConnell			Dodd	Mikulski		
Coverdell	Murkowski			Dorgan	Moseley-Braun		
Craig	Nickles			Exon	Moynihan		
D'Amato	Packwood			Feingold	Murray		
DeWine	Pressler			Feinstein	Nunn		
Dole	Roth			Ford	Pell		
Domenici	Santorum			Glenn	Reid		
Faircloth	Shelby			Graham	Robb		
Frist	Simpson			Harkin	Rockefeller		
Gorton	Smith			Hollings	Sarbanes		
Gramm	Snowe			Inouye	Simon		
Grams	Specter				Wellstone		
Grassley	Thomas						
Hatch	Thompson						
Hatfield	Thurmond						
Helms	Warner						

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

priorities more adequately. However, we do not think that the best way to determine priorities is to give carte blanche authority to the reserve forces. If we were to grant that authority, we all know that in reality Administration bureaucrats in the Pentagon instead of reserve commanders would have the final word on procurement priorities. We are not about to cede that authority to the Administration. Just as Congress makes specific procurement decisions for the active duty forces, it should make them for the reserves. No one would make the suggestion of just letting the Pentagon have sole authority for making its procurement decisions. Obviously, that decision would really be to give the President sole authority over that huge portion of the budget, because his minions at the Pentagon would follow his dictates. The proponents of the Levin amendment are well motivated--they want the best possible use of scarce procurement funds by the reserves. Their amendment, though, would not result in the best possible use. Therefore, we urge that it be tabled.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

We oppose the earmark process for procurement for the Guard and reserves. It is impossible to make a reasoned judgment on these proposed earmarks when they are made because of time constraints. The Administration does not propose them; the Pentagon does not propose them; the Guard does not propose them. Instead, they appear in authorizations bills, and Members usually have only a few days to examine them. We think that a better process would be to defer to the expert judgment of the commanders of the reserve forces themselves. We do not make this proposal simply to give authority to our Democratic President, as has been unfairly implied--from 1993 through 1995 we supported giving this generic authority to the reserve commanders. In fiscal year 1993, President Bush was still in office. Therefore, our past actions prove that we are not making this proposal for partisan advantage. We agree with our colleagues that the increased importance of our reserve forces has made it all the more important that the authorization process be improved, but, until such time as it is, it is more appropriate to allow these forces to determine their own procurement needs. We trust our colleagues agree, and will join us in opposing the motion to table.